

[illegible]

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory (Public)

FORM 2

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

Area Unique Identifier CDCA 1334-1 Acreage 97,277

(If the inventory area consists of subunits, list the acreage of each and evaluate separately).

In completing steps (1) – (5), use additional space as necessary.

(1) Is the area of sufficient size? (If the area meets one of the exceptions to the size criterion, check "Yes" and describe the exception in the space provided below),

Yes X No

Note: If "No is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "N/A" for the remaining questions below.

Description (describe the boundaries of the area—wilderness inventory roads, property lines, etc.):

The northern boundary is formed by a maintained dirt road which joins Joshua Tree National Park to Kaiser mining operations on the eastern border. The western boundary of this area is contiguous with a designated wilderness area in Joshua Tree National Park. The eastern boundary includes maintained dirt roads, a portion of an industrial railroad, and a transmission line corridor right-of-way and access road. The southern boundary includes Interstate 10 and portions of the Hayfield Pumping Station road. The unit contains State, Private, and Public (NPS, BLM) Lands with Northern and Eastern Colorado (NECO) designated routes mainly in the southern portion.

(2) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes X No N/A

Note: If "No is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "N/A" for the remaining questions below.

Description (include land ownership, location, topography, vegetation, and summary of major human uses/activities):

The diverse Eagle Mountains cover the majority of this area. Large, exfoliated boulders of quartz monzonite make up the southern limits of these mountains. The "jumbles" of rocks contrast highly with the dark, jagged rocks found more in the interior of this site. Large, interior washes and valleys, such as "Big Wash", add to the complexity of the area. In some portions of the washes, vegetation is extremely thick and includes varieties of yucca, cactus, smoketrees, and various annuals. The vast majority of this area generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work being substantially unnoticeable. Within the interior, and in the Big Wash area, only a few past mining activities are visible and most do not detract from the primeval character and influence of the land. Lands in T4S, R14E, Sec. 4, 11, and 12 have been excluded due to mining activity, plus the entire eastern and southern portions have been excluded with the numerous NECO designated routes and primitive ways. The remaining lands in T4S, R13E, Sec. 1, 2, 3 (NW, SW, SE corners) and T4S, R14E, Sec. 5 and 6, which account for 2,884 acres, appear to be natural, free of structures and roads and are adjacent to Joshua Tree National Park Wilderness.

(3) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remaining is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes X No N/A

Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for solitude):

Opportunities for solitude are outstanding within this roadless area due to the extreme ruggedness and diversity of the topography. Small canyons and boulder piles tend to create an intimate feeling of solitude, while some of the enclosed interior valleys and washes, combined with the ability of the vegetation to screen visitors from one another, allow a feeling of wide-open spaciousness. Associated with these varying types of solitude, the diversity of the terrain and relationship to Joshua Tree National Park wilderness, offers outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

(4) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remaining is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?

Yes No N/A X

Note: If "No" is checked for both 3 and 4, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "N/A" for question 5.

Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation):

Associated with the varying types of solitude, the diversity of the terrain and relationship to Joshua Tree National Park wilderness, offers outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

(5) Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value)?

Yes No N/A X

Description:

(Add description here)

Summary of Analysis*

Area Unique Identifier: CDCA 1334-1

Summary

The remaining lands in T4S, R13E, Sec. 1, 2, 3 (NW, SW, SE corners) and T4S, R14E, Sec. 5 and 6, which account for 2,884 acres, appear to be natural, free of structures and roads and are adjacent to Joshua Tree National Park Wilderness. The diverse Eagle Mountains cover the majority of this area. Large, exfoliated boulders of quartz monzonite make up the southern limits of these mountains. The "jumbles" of rocks contrast highly with the dark, jagged rocks found more in the interior of this site. Large, interior washes and valleys, such as "Big Wash", add to the complexity of the area. In some portions of the washes, vegetation is extremely thick and includes varieties of yucca, cactus, smoketrees, and various annuals. The vast majority of this area generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work being substantially unnoticeable. Within the interior, and in the Big Wash area, only a few past mining activities are visible and most do not detract from the primeval character and influence of the land. Opportunities for solitude are outstanding within this roadless area due to the extreme ruggedness and diversity of the topography. Small canyons and boulder piles tend to create an intimate feeling of solitude, while some of the enclosed interior valleys and washes, combined with the ability of the vegetation to screen visitors from one another, allow a feeling of wide-open spaciousness. Associated with these varying types of solitude, the diversity of the terrain and relationship to Joshua Tree National Park wilderness, offers outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Results of analysis:

1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Does the area appear to be natural? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation? ☒ Yes ☐ No
4. Does the area have supplemental values? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Check one:

☒ The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as Land with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC)

☐ The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by (team members):

John Johnson, ECFO - Environmental Protection Specialist, 6/11/2014

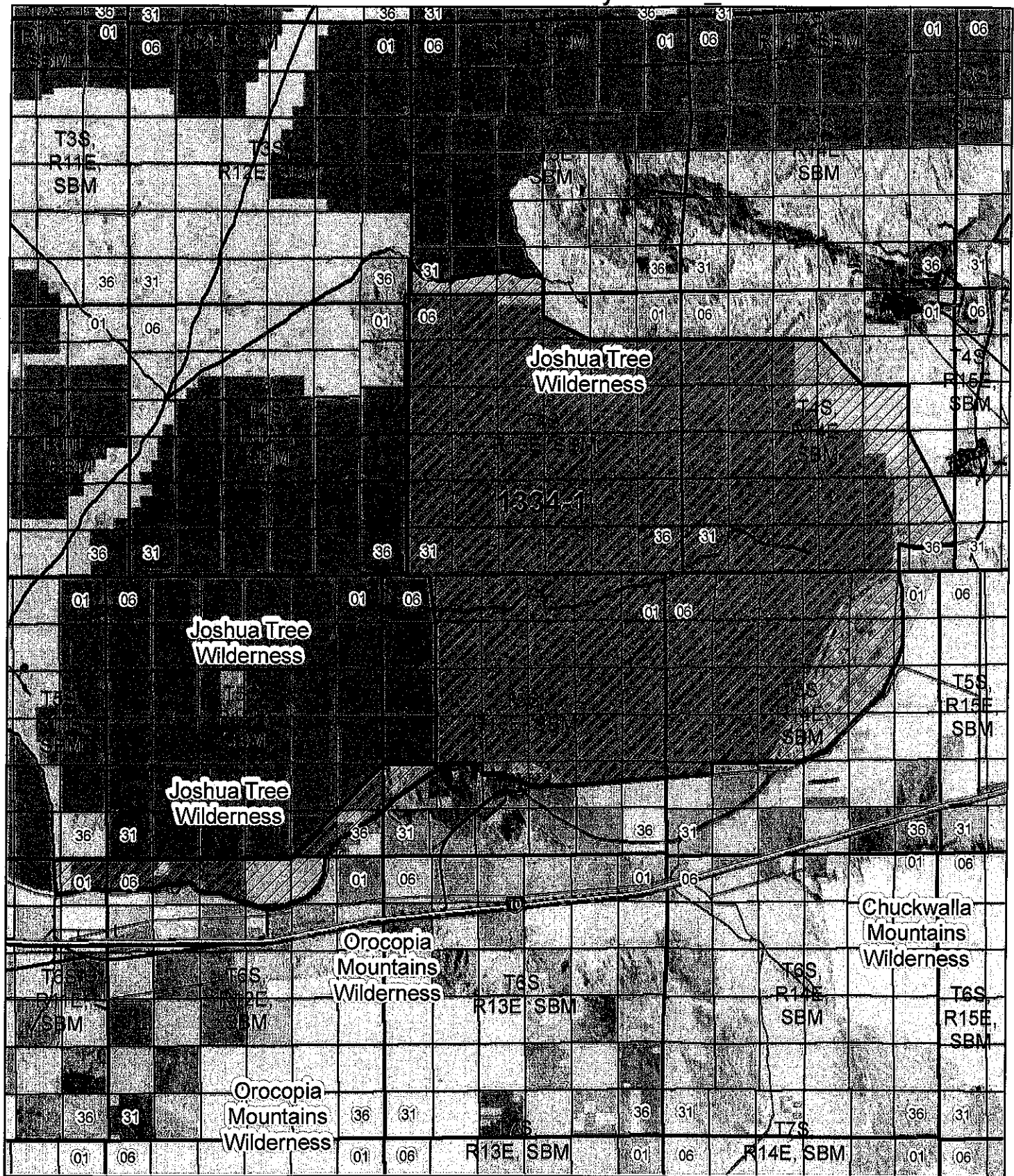
Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):

Name: John A. K... [Signature] Title: Field Manager

Date: 2/9/16

***This form documents information that constitutes and inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR or 1610.5-3**

Wilderness Character Inventory CDCA 1334-1



Legend

Wilderness Inventory Units

Federal Wilderness Surface Management

Managing Agency

- Bureau of Land Management
- US Forest Service
- National Park Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service

Government Lands

AGENCY

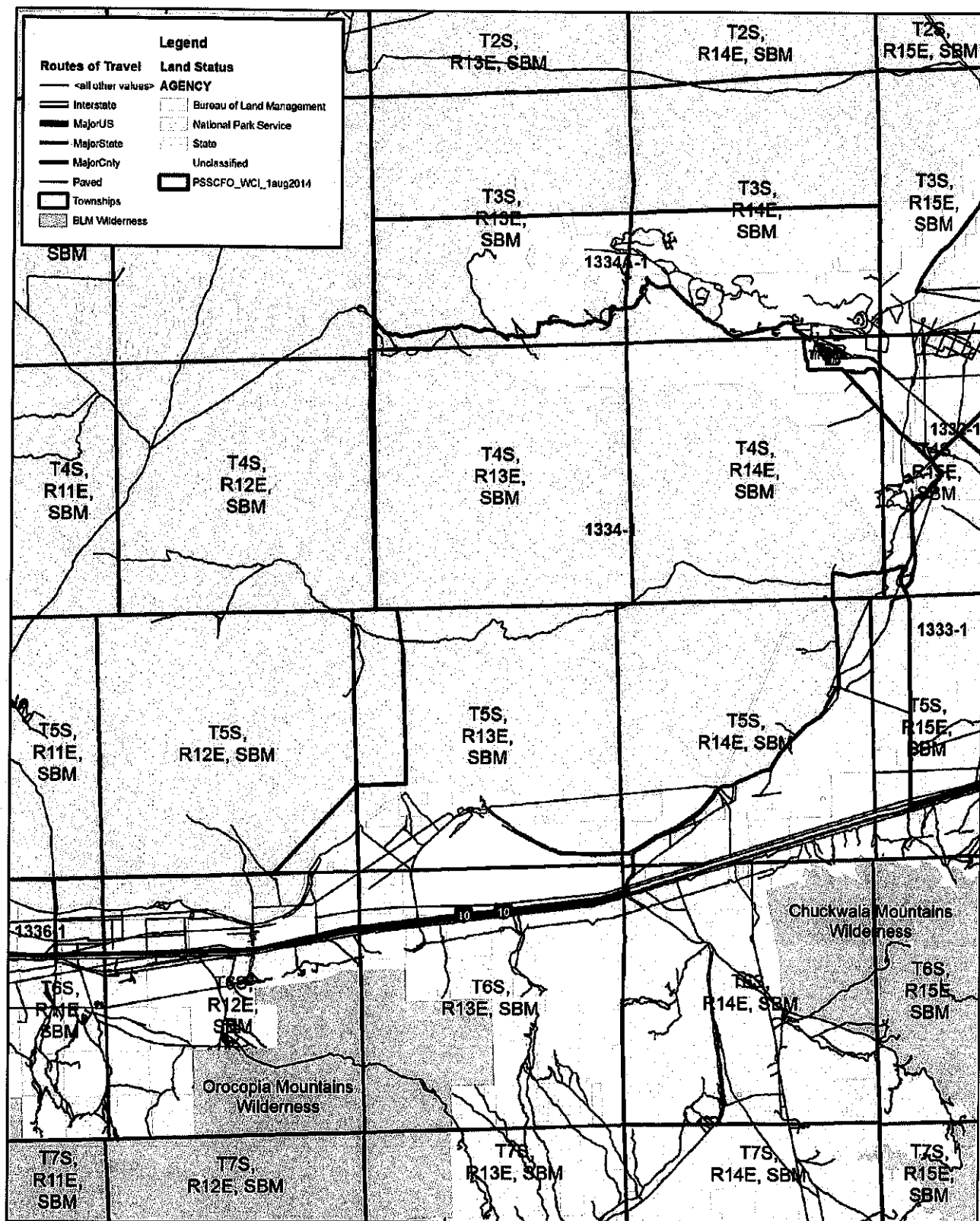
- Bureau of Land Management
- Forest Service
- National Park Service
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Department of Defense
- Other Federal
- State
- Local Government



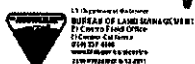
0 2.5 5 Miles

1:180,280

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 Date Prepared: 1/21/2016
 Project: CDCA_1334-1



Wilderness Character Inventory - CDCA_1334-1



0 6 12 Miles



V. OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE OR A PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED TYPE OF RECREATION

Because of the relatively small size, flat terrain, and sparse vegetation, the ability to screen visitors from one another is greatly restricted. Outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation are lacking.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

One comment indicated that the lower two-thirds of the parcel should be given wilderness designation. The remainder expressed viewpoints that the area be deleted from further wilderness consideration.

AREA 334

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The northern border is formed by a maintained dirt road which joins Joshua Tree National Monument to Kaiser mining operations on the eastern border. The western boundary of this area is contiguous with a designated wilderness area in Joshua Tree National Monument. The eastern boundary includes maintained dirt roads, a portion of an industrial railroad, and a transmission line corridor right-of-way and access road. The southern boundary includes Interstate 10 and portions of the Hayfield Pumping Station road.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

This site includes approximately 12 sections of non-public land, scattered throughout the area and accounting for approximately 10 percent of the total land area.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

The extremely diverse Eagle Mountains cover the majority of this area. Large, exfoliated boulders of quartz monzonite make up the southern limits of these mountains. These "jumbles" of rocks contrast highly with the dark, jagged rocks found more in the interior of this site. Large, interior washes and valleys, such as Big Wash, add to the complexity of the area. In some portions of the washes, vegetation is extremely thick and includes varieties of yucca, cactus, smoketrees and various annuals.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

The vast majority of this area generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work being substantially unnoticeable. Within the interior, and in the Big Wash area, only a few past mining activities are visible and most do not detract from the primeval character and influence of the land. The patented Rainbow End Mine and a patent mining claim located in Section 4 (T. 4 S., R. 14 E.) has been excluded. A large portion of the area in the northeast section was excluded from further wilderness consideration due to the extensive open-pit mine operation associated with the Eagle Mountain Iron Ore Mine. The boundary of the potential Wilderness Study Area was adjusted accordingly. The extreme southern portion was also removed from consideration due to extensive private land ownership, flood control dikes, and the permanent improvements and human habitation associated with the Hayfield Pumping Station.

V. OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE OR A PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED TYPE OF RECREATION

Opportunities for solitude are outstanding within this roadless area due to the extreme ruggedness and diversity of the topography. Small canyons and boulder piles tend to create an intimate feeling of solitude, while some of the enclosed interior valleys and washes, combined with the ability of the vegetation to screen visitors from one another, allow a feeling of wide-open spaciousness. Associated with these varying types of solitude, the diversity of terrain and relationship to Joshua Tree National Monument wilderness, offers outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

The majority of public comments support further consideration of this area as an extension of Joshua Tree National Monument. Several comments supported the findings

regarding roads and mining activity. Other comments opposed to inclusion were too general in nature to field validate.

AREA 334A

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The northern and western boundaries of this roadless area are contiguous with the Joshua Tree National Monument. The eastern boundary is a dirt maintained road. The southern boundary consists of a mining road.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

Approximately 30 percent of the area is in non-public land forming a slender irregular shape near the middle. The western third is completely in public land.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

This area is characterized by boulders and rugged mountains dissected by numerous small canyons. A small portion of the relatively flat to rolling Pinto Basin is within the western portion and contains scattered creosote.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

The western one-third of the area is affected primarily by the forces of nature where the imprint of man's work is substantially unnoticeable. In contrast, the eastern two-thirds is heavily impacted by extensive open pit mining scars. Numerous tunnels, shafts, and tailings lace this area, thus altering the natural appearance of the landscape. Roads to "satellite" mining and exploration areas radiate north and westward from the Eagle Mountain Mine, degrading the natural character of the mountains up to the ridgelines where the border of Joshua Tree National Monument is located. The eastern boundary of the resulting potential study area has been adjusted westward to the first ridgeline of the mountains, near the Cactus Mine.

V. OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE OR A PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED TYPE OF RECREATION

The ruggedness and diversity of terrain, which tends to screen visitors from one another, as well as adjacency to Joshua Tree National Monument wilderness, all tend to create outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

A few comments were received supporting the inclusion of the west portion of the area for further wilderness study. The comments also urged the addition of portions of the mountains between Joshua Tree National Monument and the Eagle Mountain Mine. However, mining activities affect the natural character up to the ridgeline, which coincides with the Monument border. Mining interests expressed concern that future expansion of current mining operations would be restricted by wilderness study designation. This concern is not an inventory factor.

AREA 335

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The area is bounded to the north by State Highway 62; to the east, by the graded Gold Crown Road; and, to the south and west, by Joshua Tree National Monument and a short segment of a paved road leading into the Monument from Twenty-nine Palms.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

Public lands predominate. Non-public sections occur in a widely scattered pattern and account for approximately 10 percent of the total area.